is pending;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) how much time the Board of Arbitration is expected to take in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI BUTA SINGH): (a) No, Sir.
(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Public Distribution System

1946. SHRI VIRENDRA KATARIA: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Public Distribution System was evolved mainly to insulate the poor against rise of prices of essential commodities;

(b) whether it is also a fact that today all income groups, both rich and poor enjoy the subsidies provided on items such as foodgrains, sugar edible oils and kerosene and as a result thereof, the persons below poverty line have to suffer a lot;

(c) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(d) whether Government propose to eliminate the higher income group people from the benefits of Public Distribution System and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI BUTA SINGH): (a) to (d) The Public Distribution System has evolved from being a "rationing" system for the distribution of scarce commodities to a "fair price" system for moderating open market prices and for facilitating food security at the household level. As per the present policy of the Central Government coverage of PDS is universal in nature. However, in order to improve the reach of the PDS to the chronically food deficit regions of the country where a large number of the population below the poverty line live, the Central Government is issuing foodgrains meant for distribution in areas identified under the Revamped Public Distribution System at specially subsidised prices which are Rs. 50 per quintal lower than the Central Issue Prices for normal PDS areas. Operational responsibility for implementation of the Public Distribution System including determination of the eligibility criteria, scales of entitlement, etc. rest with the State Governments. Some State Governments have excluded certain affluent categories of consumers from the supply of PDS foodgrains. Some other State Governments have system of issuing foodgrains at specially subsidised prices to the poor households identified by them. A Committee of Ministers constituted by the Advisory Council on PDS to formulate recommendations on a National Policy on PDS has recommended that it is imperative that certain affluent categories of persons are excluded from access to PDS foodgrains in order to ensure larger and more meaningful quantities of foodgrains to the really needy and deserving sections of the society. The Advisory Council on PDS which considered the Report of the Committee of Ministers decided that the matter would need to be discussed further with the State Governments through the forum of the National Development Council.

Policy to ensure PDS supplies reaching target population

1947. DR. B.B. DUTTA: Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have finalised a "foolproof policy" to ensure that foodgrains and other essential commodities covered under PDS reach the target population at reasonable prices;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) how Government propose to implement the policy?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI BUTA SINGH): (a) to (c) The strengthening and streamlining of the Public Distribution system is a continual process. Blocks covered under area specific programmes such as Desert Development Programme (DDP), Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP), Designated Hill Area (DHA) and Integrated Tribal Development Projects (ITDP) were identified, in consultation with the State Governments/UT Administrations, for special focus under the Scheme for Revamped PDS. The Revamped Public Distribution System scheme was launched on 1st January, 1992. Under this scheme, State Governments/UT Administrations agreed to improve the availability of PDS commodities, especially foodgrains, to the population living in these blocks, which presently number 1775.

The Central Government issues foodgrains meant for distribution in RPDS areas at specially subsidised Central Issue prices which are lower than the normal Central Issue Prices for PDS by Rs. 50 per qunital. Central Government has also advised the State Governments/UT Administrations that the end Retail Prices of foodgrains in the RPDS areas should not exceed the Central Issue prices by more than 25 paise per kilogram. The Central Government has earmarked an additional 3.2 million tonnes of foodgrains, over and above the normal allocation, for distribution by the States/UTs to the RPDS areas. The Central Government also provides financial assistance to States/UTs for construction of godowns and purchase of vans in order to strengthen their storage and distribution infrastructure.

उचित मूल्य की दुकानों में उपलब्ध कराई जाने वाली वस्तुएं

1948. **श्री जगन्नाथ सिंह:** क्या नागरिक आपूर्ति, उपभोक्ता मामले और सार्वजनिक वितरण मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) उचित मूल्य की दुकानों में कौन-कौन से खाद्य पदार्थ तथा वस्तु उपलब्ध करायी जाती है;

(ख) क्या देश के सभी राज्यों और संघ शासित क्षेत्रों में उपलब्ध करायी जाने वाली वस्तुओं की कीमत एक समान है; और

(ग) यदि नहीं, तो इसके क्या कारण है?

नागरिक पूर्ति, उपभोक्ता मामले और सार्वजनिक वितरण मंत्री (श्री बूटा सिंह): (क) केन्द्रीय सरकार, राज्यों/संघ राज्य क्षेत्रों की सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली के जरिए वितरण हेतु छः मुख्य आवश्यक वस्तुओं, अर्थात् चावल, गेहूं, चीनी, आयातित खाद्य तेल, मिट्टी का तेल और साफ्ट कोक का थोक में आवंटन करती है। राज्य सरकारों/संघ राज्य क्षेत्र प्रशासनों को संपुष्ट सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली के क्षेत्रों में स्थानीय आवश्यकताओं और पसंद के आधार पर उचित दर दुकानों के जरिए वितरण हेतु आम खपत की अतिरिक्त वस्तुओं को शामिल करने की सलाह दी गई है। अनेक राज्यों/संघ राज्य क्षेत्रों द्वारा संपुष्ट सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली के तहत आने वाले क्षेत्रों में चाय, दाल आयोडिनयुक्त नमक और साबुन जैसी वस्तुओं का वितरण किए जाने की सूचना है।

(ख) और (ग) केन्द्रीय सरकार नियत केन्द्रीय निर्गम मूल्यों पर खाद्यान्नों का थोक में आवंटन करती है तथा राज्य सरकारें/संघ राज्य क्षेत्र प्रशासन स्थानीय करों, लेवी, थोक/खुदरा विक्रेताओं के लिए मार्जिन, परिवहन प्रभार इत्यादि को हिसाब में लेते हुए स्वयं ही अन्तिम खुदरा मूल्य निर्धारित करते हैं। संपुष्ट सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली क्षेत्रों के मामले में केन्द्रीय सरकार ने राज्यों/संघ राज्य क्षेत्रों को सलाह दी है कि इन क्षेत्रों के लिए अन्तिम खुदरा मूल्य इन क्षेत्रों के लिए केन्द्रीय निर्गम मूल्यों से 25 पैसे प्रति कि०ग्रा० से अधिक नहीं होनी चाहिए। सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली की चीनी का खुदरा मूल्य देश भर में एक समान है। इस समय सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली के बिक्री केन्द्रों के जरिए चीनी का अन्तिम खुदरा मूल्य 9.05 रुपये प्रति कि०ग्रा० है। सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली की अन्य वस्तुओं के अन्तिम खुदरा मूल्य राज्य सरकारों द्वारा परिवहन प्रभार,